(b) and (c) Distribution of assistance for relief and rehabilitation at the ground level is the responsibility of the State Government.

Revision in MSP-based Government procurement of grains

3543. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Economic Advisory Council has recommended drastic revision in the existing system of Minimum Support Price-based Government procurement of grains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government reaction thereon;

(d) what are the other recommendations made by Prime Minister's EAC on agriculture sector;

(e) whether Government have examined the recommendations of the Council; and

(f) the action proposed by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council recommended that the present procurement policy should be drastically revised so as to limit Government purchases only to preventing a sharp fall in prices (i.e. to support prices) instead of Government buying all that is offered at pre-determined "fair" prices; and that the role of FCI should be limited to minimum buffer stocking (i.e. not more than 10 million tonnes). To feed its PDS, the Government should invite tenders from private grain companies / traders to deliver a specified amount of grain at a place and timing determined by the Government.

(c) The recommendations of the Council are under consideration of the Government. A Standing Committee of State Chief Ministers and Union Ministers has been constituted which, *inter-alia*, will consider re-structuring of the system of procurement of foodgrains.

(d) The Economic Advisory Council has made several recommendations for agriculture and allied activities which include market reforms, decontrol of essential commodities, reduction in credit margin, rationalization of taxes/ fees and raw agricultural commodities, dereservation of ground-nut/seed and mustard processing from the Small Scale Industries list, abolition of

Milk Product Order, abolition of retention price scheme of urea manufacturers, etc.

(e) and (f) The recommendations have been conveyed to the various concerned Ministries / Departments. Action has been taken towards implementation of some of the recommendations.

Corruption and victimization in ICAR

3544. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 50 Members of Parliament wrote to Prime Minister in March, 2001 regarding corruption and victimization rampant in Indian Council of Agricultural Research;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Prime Minister has examined the matter; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The letters written by Hon'ble Members of Parliament to Hon'ble Prime Minister were forwarded by PMO to Secretary, DARE for appropriate action. Appropriate action has already been taken by sending replies to the Hon'ble Members of Parliament apprising them of the facts.

Integrated Cooperative Credit Structure of Andhra Pradesh

3545. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has urged the Union Government to provide assistance to the Integrated Cooperative Credit Structure of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Government has also requested the Union Government to waive the accumulated losses while setting up a Cooperative Bank Rehabilitation Development Fund, to assist the cooperative banks; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?